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Diana T Fritz 02/06/2007 05:43:38 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

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CONFIDENTIAL

SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

June 07, 2004

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1881 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PREL, MOPS
Captions: None
Subject: UAE DETAINS IRANIAN FISHING VESSEL
Ref: None

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 01881

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: DAO RSO P/M AMB DCM ECON

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: A/DCM:HOLSIN-WINDECK
DRAFTED: POL:JFMAYBURY
CLEARED: DAO:MWEAVER

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4658
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 001881

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP AND NEA/NGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2009
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [IR](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: UAE DETAINS IRANIAN FISHING VESSEL

(U) Classified by Acting Deputy Chief of Mission
Hilary Olsin-Windecker, reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

11. (C) The UAE Coast Guard has seized an Iranian fishing boat that had entered UAE territorial waters, according to reports in the local press and confirmed by Embassy government contacts on June 7. The incident, which took place on June 2, made the front page of the English language Gulf News and was also reported in the Arabic Al-Ittihad. Press reports say the vessel's crew were detained and referred to the UAE authorities, but provided no other details. An Iranian foreign ministry spokesman was quoted as saying that the ministry "has taken action and talked to the UAE embassy. Our embassy in Abu Dhabi is active in this matter, so as soon as possible those who have been taken will be freed."

¶2. (C) A UAE government contact told us that the vessel, described by the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) as a trawler, had come too close to some of the UAE's oil platforms in the Arabian Gulf and was in UAE territorial waters. The UAE Coast Guard twice queried the vessel's occupants, then fired warning shots. When the vessel still did not respond, the Coast stopped it and seized its crew.

¶3. (U) The report of the fishing boat incident came a day after the press reported that GCC foreign ministers meeting in Riyadh had discussed the long-standing occupation by Iran of the UAE's three islands of Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Mussa. The islands issue comes up frequently at GCC meetings and annually at UNGA. GCC foreign ministers issued a statement expressing the hope that contacts between Iran and the UAE would lead to peaceful settlement of the problem. The GCC position is that the three islands and surrounding areas are integral parts of the UAE's territory. IRNA reported that an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman said that the fishing boat incident was not linked to the spat between the two countries over the three islands.

¶4. (C) Comment: The fishing boat incident involving the UAE and Iran is noteworthy because it raises to the surface again the sensitive and delicate islands issue for which Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayed Al-Nahyan is responsible. Shaykh Hamdan has not held high-level talks with the Iranians in at least 18 months, but may want to do so depending on the outcome of the boat incident. The one puzzling aspect of the boat incident is that it occurred on June 2, but was not reported by the Iranian press until June 6, and by the UAE press until June 7. We will follow up with our contacts to get more details and to find out what the UAE plans to do next.

WAHBA